Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Cuba: Daily Cited on Approval of Helms-Burton Bill

PA1203121896 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1602 GMT 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 11 Mar (PL) — The daily TRABAJADORES stated today that U.S. politicians have done their best to exert pressure on Cuba with the recent approval of the Helms-Burton bill by the U.S. Congress.

The publication of the Cuban Workers Federation stated that the screws of the blockade on Cuba, which has been in force since 1962, cannot be tightened any further, particularly when the interests of U.S. allies are also being hurt by trying to damage the island.

On the purpose of the legislation, the newspaper says new forecasts will surface about the collapse of the revolution, the same predictions that have failed for more than three decades.

The publication stated that "it seems like too much to blockade the world." It says the Helms-Burton bill is a "boomerang" that could yield even greater consequences for the U.S. Government's foreign relations than for Cuba.

Without overlooking the negative impact the bill will have on the Cuban economy, TRABAJADORES states that it will be difficult to reverse the economic recovery achieved in 1995 (2.5 percent), a figure reached mostly with internal resources and not through foreign investment.

The purpose of the Helms-Burton bill is to globalize the blockade on Cuba with severe sanctions on foreign businessmen who decide to invest in Cuba.

According to the daily, the U.S. hostility, with the complicity of ultra-right Cuban groups living in Miami, will trigger a revitalized unity of the Cuban people around their government, a point which Washington's current strategy has not considered.

Cuba: Clinton Signs Helms-Burton Bill Into Law

PA1203173696 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1621 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 12 Mar (PL) — U.S. President William Clinton signed into law at the White House today the Helms-Burton bill that stiffens the blockade in force for over 30 years and which has been questioned abroad.

In a brief ceremony, the President affirmed that the signing of this legislation "sends a powerful and united message" to Havana of the U.S. intention of achieving a "political transition" in Cuba.

Clinton reiterated well-known charges against Cuba in the wake of the 24 February downing of two light airplanes coming from the United States that violated Cuban airspace.

Attending the signing were the law sponsors, Senator Jesse Helms and Representative Dan Burton, both from the Republican Party's extreme right wing; Cuban-American lawmakers; and relatives of the pilots of the pirate light airplanes, among others.

Observers noted that Clinton chose today to enact the measure because it is "Super Tuesday," the day in which the Republican Party is holding primary elections in six states, including Florida, for the November elections.

The new "Helms-Burton-Clinton" [as received] law seeks to extend to third countries the commercial sanctions the United States has been enforcing on the island, which is why the extraterritorial nature of the law was criticized among others by the EU and by Canada and Mexico, its North American partners.

The UN General Assembly condemned overwhelmingly Washington's anti-Cuban measures in the past four years and, according to local analysts, the current measure will meet growing resistance, even from some U.S. allies. Leaders of the ruling Democratic Party and the President even criticized parts of the original bill, which was submitted last year.

On several occasions, the President threatened to veto it because of certain chapters that he considered contrary to U.S. interests.

In late February, in the wake of the light airplane incident, the President announced — among other measures against Havana — that he would approve the bill.

Last week, the U.S. Senate approved it (74-22) and so did the House of Representatives (347-67), and it was signed today by Clinton.

Cuba: Daily Says Clinton Erred in Signing Bill

PA1203183796 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1651 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 12 Mar (PL) — U.S. President William Clinton is making a big error in his political career with the signing of the Helms-Burton law and his alliance with the U.S. ultra-right and the Miami Mafia," official daily GRANMA affirmed today. [quotation mark as received]

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In a commentary on the White House endorsement of the aforementioned law, the mouthpiece of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba noted that Clinton, pressured by the seduction of an electoral race noted for showing who is "tougher," leaves the Executive without authority to lead his country's foreign policy.

Clinton takes on, before his nation and history, the responsibility of having permitted this transgression and unleashed an unpredictable confrontation with his own allies, it added.

The GRANMA editorial noted that the U.S. head of state also missed an opportunity to bring the dispute with Cuba to negotiations and understanding, and agreed to sign the same law he had rejected months ago.

Then, it described the presidential prerogative of delaying implementation of the law as another setback imposed on the president, because to do that he would need Congress to approve his reasons.

The Helms-Burton law affects the whole world, since the enforcement of that concoction has an extraordinary nature and entails the meddling by Washington in the domestic affairs of third countries, in this case many of them its own allies, the newspaper stressed.

This time the United States seems to have gone too far and is trying to put a noose around the neck of those that, regardless of ideologies, decided to do business and invest in Cuba, the commentary notes.

GRANMA explained that while the world is heading toward a confrontation with U.S. haughtiness and arrogance, Cuba is returning, "more united and aware that we cannot expect anything we are not capable of achieving through our own effort."

Finally, it affirmed that the law may intimidate some and postpone dreams but will not succeed in preventing "that we continue defending tooth and nail the independence of the nation."

Cuba: View of Clinton Signing Helms-Burton Legislation

PA1203224296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1913 GMT 12 Mar 96

[By Javier Rodriguez: "Striking Deals With the Devil"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since before our era, when superstitions, obscuration and fear of the unknown controlled a man's life, striking a deal with what was dubbed the devil was always one of the worst things one could do.

First, there were the legends and old stories. Later, in modern times, there were novels, films, and even comic strips. They narrated and showed to fearful believers, or simple spectators, or readers who enjoyed them the serious consequences of the alliances struck with this alleged guardian of a very hot hell.

The problem is that even though the mighty devil may grant his partners certain benefits to strike the cherished deal, he does not take long to "settle accounts" with those who believed they would gain by helping him.

In short, it seems that striking a deal with the bad guys in politics, regardless of one's beliefs, is as disastrous, as far as the final results are concerned, as permanently simmering in the flaming catacombs where the horned character lives.

According to certain analysts of international policies, it is likely that U.S. President William Clinton made this mistake, as he has allied himself with the country's most conservative sectors and the most aggressive groups of people of Cuban origin living in Miami in order to approve the Helms-Burton bill.

Setting his sights on eventual domestic electoral advantages, Clinton today approved the controversial legislation that he pledged for months to reject and veto if Congress approved it. To do this, he even gave in to organizing a televised ceremony at the White House with the participation of a group of congressmen and members of anti-Cuban organizations that have permanently and publicly carried out the worst attacks on his domestic and foreign policies.

In an effort to intensify even more the economic and commercial siege on Cuba and to make another attempt at annihilating its political process—nine previous U.S. administrations have failed to do so—Clinton declined to use his power to change the course of his country's foreign policies.

U.S. television showed images of the president exchanging salutes and smiles with those who recently described him as weak and inept and who have practically called him a communist for signing the migration agreements between the United States and Cuba in 1995, but as the Cuban issue has been turned into one of the main issues of the U.S. electoral campaign, the president, analysts have said, decided to forget the offenses and to give opportunities to the most recalcitrant positions regarding the domestic political arena.

The matter becomes thornier given the extraterritorial feature of the law, which intends to punish any country and businessmen, regardless of their nationality, for trading with the island.

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In addition, the law gives people of Cuban origin who became U.S. citizens following the 1959 revolutionary victory in Cuba the right to claim properties that are in the hands of society and that mostly belonged to people identified with the toppled dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

Cuban parliament President Ricardo Alarcon has described the law as "an insult to the world." Above all, it has triggered a significant, negative reaction from the international community and the most representative organizations such as the UN General Assembly, which has rejected it on four occasions.

In any case, Cubans are facing the problem by stressing their resolve to resist, pointing to the isolation Washington will get in to, and believe Clinton will be seriously burned by this embrace with the devil.

Cuba: Havana Province CTC Assembly on Sugarcane Program

PA1303034096 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 9 Mar 96

[From the "National Radio News"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The initial debate during the assembly of the Cuban Workers Federation [CTC] in Havana province focused on the integral sugarcane program, and the current harvest.

Armando Delgado, who was confirmed as CTC's secretary general in Havana province, stated that even though sugarcane grinding in the province has surpassed 80 percent in recent days, — with a potential yield of over 11 — there are still problems related to the stability of some of the mills, such as the Martinez Prieto, Augusto Cesar Sandino, Goriflores Santa Coloma, Osvaldo Sanchez, and Camilo Cienfuegos. A worker in this last mill stated:

[Begin unidentified worker recording] The job being performed by workers [words indistinct]. Workers are trying to solve every problem, incorporating new machinery into the production. [end recording]

Attention to sugarcane manual cutters, and the sponsorship of provincial entities and centers must not be neglected. This was the opinion of the delegates, who warned about the lack of organization of some of the people in charge of this job, such as the 19 de Abril enterprise, which is in charge of supporting the Felix Garcia brigade of macheteros — the best sugarcane manual cutting unit in the province.

Cuba: Commentary on Importance of Current Sugar Harvest

PA1203162396 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 11 Mar 96

[Commentary by Orlando Contreras]

[FBIS Translated Text] The adverse weather conditions that have resulted in the loss of life and severe property damage have also affected the sugar harvest to the point that nearly 100 sugar mills have been forced to interrupt grinding operations.

The weather has not yet stabilized, but measures have already been adopted to provide care for victims, repair damaged homes, and adjust as much as possible to the damages.

I do not intend to discuss details on this issue. The essence of it consists of the fact that the entire country must coordinate its organizational efforts in order to minimize as much as possible the impact of the storm on cutting, lifting, and grinding operations.

Even though all sugar harvest activities are important, due to the specific weight of the sugar industry in our foreign trade, this year's harvest is of particular significance.

As is already well-known, the country was able to secure short-term loans, at high interest rates, to finance its harvest. Natural eventualities such as this are unavoidable. In spite of this, it is still necessary to meet the financial obligations contracted, and this will only be possible if sugar production estimates are met.

It might not be ill-advised to keep in mind the urgent need for fresh funds that our economy, currently in a recovery phase, is confronting. In other words, an urgent need for financial support for productive investments.

In today's world Cuba represents an unusual case. Blockaded for more than three decades and facing the trauma of an abrupt loss of markets and sources of credit caused by the fall of the European socialist bloc, particularly the Soviet Union, the GDP declined three years ago by more than 30 percent.

However, this year the economy recovered to the point that it experienced a 2.5 percent growth rate, and estimates for the rest of the year anticipate an annual growth of close to 5 percent.

Any other country of the Third World — or of the First World for that matter — blockaded, cut off from loans, with an enormous scarcity of raw materials, an insufficient supply of crude oil, would have collapsed.

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Cuba, the Cuban people, are accomplishing the tremendous task of recovering.

In order not to undermine this process, the results of the sugar harvest, according to what has been planned, are of vital importance.

Whether or not we interrupt the difficult mechanisms to obtain international assistance, even the likelihood of renewing Paris Club negotiations with our creditors depends on the successful culmination of the sugar harvest.

The sugar harvest is of tremendous importance, because of the currency it creates. However, it is most likely of more significance because of the message it sends to today's world, which is governed more by concrete figures than by emotions of solidarity.

Cuba: Megawatt Unit Incorporated Into Electricity System

PA1303025296 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 12 Mar 96

[Report by Victor Galdos Ortiz from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The incorporation of a new 150 megawatt unit in the Felton Thermoelectric Plant, in Cuba's northeast, into the national electricity system is a relevant step in plans to expand the installed capability of electricity generation. After several years of construction and a delayed incorporation into the national electricity system, it was finally possible to bring on line this new thermoelectric unit located in Felton Municipality, Holguin Province.

Although it will take from three to five months for the unit to reach its optimum performance parameters and, therefore, make a major contribution to the electricity system, its incorporation helps to boost the country's electricity system with a greater reliability.

In this decade, this vital system for the economy was hurt by the shortage of spare parts, which used to be supplied by the defunct socialist bloc. Programmed maintenance work was delayed due to the lack of foreign currency in the country, and the thermoelectric plants lost efficiency and reliability as a result and experienced constant damage.

About two years ago, electricity blackouts in the state and residential sectors reached a critical point with the subsequent damage to the economic sector and [words indistinct], as well as to the annoyance of residents. Although the country' foreign currency investments may be low, it has allowed the resumption of vital maintenance work in thermoelectric plants. The enormous financial limitations notwithstanding, workers of the electricity sector were able to gradually recover the vitality of the national electricity system. Thanks to their daily activities in 1995, the generation of this energy grew 6 percent compared to the previous year. Efficiency increased too, as 3.7 grams of less fuel were consumed per kilowatt-hour generated. Thanks to a 57 percent increase in the availability of the thermoelectric plants [words indistinct] the thermoelectric plants that generate the country's electricity are still making internal adaptations in order to use larger quantities of local oil, which is heavier and has a higher sulfur content than regular oil.

The Cuba Electricity Union is planning to improve the quality and efficiency of the electricity system, to lower costs, and to raise available power to 62 percent. The shortage of the necessary resources and irregularities in fuel supplies for the time being will prevent the disappearance of blackouts, although they will be more spread out.

Haiti

Haiti: UN Requests Inquiry on Cite Soleil Incidents

PA1203172396 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 11 Mar 96

[From "The Morning Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On 9 March, the National Police presented their version of the facts and the final toll from incidents last week in Cite Soleil: Seven dead, including four members of the Red Army. Three other victims were allegedly executed, separate from the confrontations between police and armed civilians. Furthermore, the spokesman for the National Police indicated that several weapons were confiscated during operations. Arrests were also made, according to Herold Israel. [passage omitted]

By the way, I am recalling for you that the UN Mission in Haiti [UNMIH] spokesman presented a final toll of nine deaths. According to Eric Falt, the victims included people killed at point-blank range. The UNMIH asked Haitian authorities to open an inquiry to determine the circumstances under which those people were killed.

The UN/OAS Civilian Mission in Haiti [MICIVIH] has announced the opening of an inquiry into the circumstances of the 6 March incidents. In a first report on the facts, the MICIVIH observers note that, more than 24 hours after the incidents, the victims' bodies had still not been picked up and no member of the judicial system had made a legal report. According to

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the first statements obtained by MICIVIH investigators, the members of the victims' families and other witnesses report that they saw policemen shooting the victims.

While acknowledging the necessity of work by the National Police against armed groups operating in Cite Soleil, the civilian mission has asked Haitian authorities to carry out an inquiry in order to establish the facts.

The following are explanations by Herold Israel, the spokesman for the National Police, during his news conference about the Cite Soleil events.

[Begin Israel recording, in Creole] The incident was provoked very early, before 0900, when a group of armed — heavily armed — people attacked the police and attempted to penetrate the post or, at least, the police station of Cite Soleil. From that moment, a burst of heavy gunfire enveloped the area.

The bandits (?infiltrated) the population and spent four hours exchanging gunfire with the police, when reinforcements came to control the situation. Shots were still being fired at 1400 [1900 GMT].

During the operation, two bandits died in a police ambush in the rail area. An Uzi and a 38-caliber gun were found in their hands. Two others died in a war of attrition with the various patrols. The provisional final toll we have at the police is seven killed during this operation. [end recording]

Haiti: Smarth To 'Follow Up' on Relations With Cuba

PA1203162296 Port-au-Prince Radio Signal FM in Creole 1230 GMT 11 Mar 96

[From "The 0730 Appointment Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Concerning diplomatic relations between Haiti and Cuba, the new Haitian prime minister says he favors continuity. Rosny Smarth does not conceal his willingness to follow the example of his predecessor, the former prime minister.

He wants to follow up on the step taken by the preceding government to establish good relations between Haiti and Cuba.

[Begin Smarth recording] I think this has to do with the function of president of the Republic. The questions of international relations are mostly a matter for the concern of the president. But normally... [pauses] Well, we will sit and discuss the problem and manage to comply with the decision that was made about relations with Cuba. [end recording]

These were the statements of Haitian Prime Minister Rosny Smarth on the question of diplomatic relations between Haiti and Cuba. We will recall for you that the first document was signed 6 February between the ministers of foreign affairs of the two countries during a visit to Port-au-Prince by the head of Cuban diplomacy.

Roberto Robaina led a delegation from his country... [pauses] He came to Haiti to participate in the inaugural ceremony of Haitian head of state Rene Garcia Preval. A document was signed to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Haiti: Preval Discusses Relations With Dominican President

PA1203230996 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 12 Mar 96

[From the "Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rene Preval will be in the Dominican Republic today. The Haitian head of state is due to leave Port-au-Prince this morning for Santo Domingo for a four-day visit of the neighboring republic.

During his stay, Preval will discuss with his counterpart, Joaquin Balaguer, relations between the two countries, which share the island of Hispaniola. The Haitian head of state will also meet with members of the private sector as well as with representatives of the political sector of this country. The topics that will be broached during the scheduled meetings on the agenda of the president's tour include the establishment of a free zone along the Haitian-Dominican border and the issue of sugarcane cutters, a true point of contention between the two nations.

It should be noted that the Haitian president at the end of this month will accept an invitation from U.S. President Bill Clinton. Preval will visit the United States and Northern America. [as heard] He m. also visit Canada after meeting with Haitians living abroad, a source close to the Presidency has told us.

Haiti: Haitian, Dominican Businessmen To Meet

PA1303001896 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 12 Mar 96

[From "The Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There will be a new meeting between Dominican and Haitian businessmen on 12 and 13 March in the Dominican Republic. This meeting follows an initial series of fruitful discussions that took place in Haiti on 5 March. Saying that this initiative was very important, the president of the Association of the Industries of the Dominican Republic, Selzo Marenzini, explained that it was necessary for the two countries to agree to take advantage of the funds the European Union

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has at its disposal to help them advance economically. The first meeting between the Haitian and Dominican businessmen was very fruitful. This is what the minister of economy and finances, Fred Joseph, stated. Joseph says he is very interested in an agreement regarding the tax system for the Haitian-Dominican border that has to be planned at today's meeting.

[Begin recording, in Creole] [Joseph] I know that meetings have been held for some time, for 10 years already. Now, we have reached a phase where there are things that can be materialized. Representative members of the private sectors of the two countries have decided to sit down together with the Haitian and the Dominican Governments to determine what we can do together, because this shared territory of ours, that is, Haiti Island, nevertheless, belongs to both of us and there are things we can do on it.

[Reporter Fares Duverne] What concrete results can we obtain from this?

[Joseph] Concretely, we have ended up with the following: An agreement was signed, an outlined agreement was signed between the two chancellors two months ago for the setting up of a commission, a mixed working commission. We have managed not only to set up the commission, but also to form a set of subcommissions that will work on sectors such as energy, communication, commerce, tourism, and especially — an aspect that is extremely important and that interests me personally as minister of economy and finances — the tax system for the border. In this sense, we have a set of regional, let us say, border projects that we are developing together, so we can see how [words indistinct] a real increase. [end recording]

This was Finance Minister Fred Joseph who was answering Fares Duverne's questions.

Haiti: Longchamp Says U.S. Embargo on Cuba 'Interference'

PA1203205296 Port-au-Prince Radio Galaxie in French 1230 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Haitian and Japanese Governments on 11 March signed a $5.1 million nonrefundable assistance agreement. This agreement was signed on the Haitian side by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Emmanuel Fritz Longchamp, and on the Japanese side, by (Tadaru Shishiu), interim Japanese charge d'affaires to Haiti. It should be noted that this agreement, whose purpose is the improvement of the road infrastructure in Haiti, is the fourth one of this kind signed by the authorities of the two governments. Jean Eric Derice, minister of planning and external cooperation, and Jacques Dorcean, minister of public works, transports, and communications, attended this ceremony. [passage omitted]

Apart from signing this agreement, the minister of foreign affairs, Fritz Longchamp was questioned by journalists. Haiti is waiting for the results of an inquiry that the UN Security Council and the ICAO recommended on the matter of the two civilian planes that Cuba shot down. Commenting on the commercial embargo imposed on Cuba thereafter by the United States without the agreement of several other countries, Haitian Chancellor Fritz Longchamp says it is interference.

[Begin recording] [Longchamp] Haiti is waiting for the results of the inquiry that was ordered not only by the UN Security Council but also by the ICAO. As regards the embargo, Haiti has always said that this effect of extraterritoriality is a violation of the international conventions, that it is quite inappropriate to.... [pauses] It is a form of interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The U.S. Congress does not have mandate [pauses] does not have jurisdiction over the relations between third-party countries and Cuba.

[Unidentified journalist] Would Haiti be ready to participate in a common step to the WTO?

[Lonchamp] Let us wait and see. What is important at this moment is the results of the inquiry of the ICAO. [end recording]

Haiti: Dominican Republic's Balaguer To Receive Preval

PA1203231196 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1500 GMT 12 Mar 96

[From the "10 O'Clock Flash"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rene Preval left Port-au-Prince this morning at 0900 for Santo Dominingo. He will be received at 1100, Santo Dominican time, or 1000, Haitian time by Vice-President Aciento Peinado and the Dominican minister of foreign affairs. At about noon, the Haitian president will be received by President Joaquin Balaguer. Talks will take place at the Dominican Presidential Palace focusing on several issues including the thorny issue of Haitian seasonal workers employed as sugarcane cutters in the [Dominican] sugar fields. The Haitian president will also have conversations with Dominican businessmen and will end his visit tomorrow, Wednesday, 13 March.

[Signal FM reported in French on 12 March at 1130 GMT that the Haitian head of state is due to leave Port-au-Prince for Santo Domingo for a four-day visit.]

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Haiti: Preval, Balaguer on Relations, Commercial Exchanges

PA1303000296 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1900 GMT 12 Mar 96

[Report by Fares Duverne from the "Haiti Today" program — live from the Dominican Republic]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Rene Preval arrived this morning at about 1015 in Santo Domingo. He received a grandiose welcome at the Las Americas Airport from his Dominican counterpart Joaquin Balaguer and Vice-President Haciento Peinado. The welcome included a gun salute from the Dominican Army. President Preval is accompanied by the minister of foreign affairs, Fritz Longchamp and several other members of the ministerial cabinet, notably the minister of economy and finances, Fred Joseph, and the president and vice president of the Haitian Parliament. As regards security, the entire area of the Santo Domingo Las Americas Airport is protected by the Dominican Special Forces. Preval arrived at the Dominican Presidential Palace at about 1145. He was received by the Dominican chancellor, Carlos Morales Troncoso. Preval and Balaguer have been in conversation for two hours.

According to Guy Alexander, Haitian ambassador to the Dominican Republic, the debates will focus on the general orientation of Haitian-Dominican relations, notably on the formalization of the commercial exchanges between the two countries, and the regulation of the migratory and environmental policies between the two governments. President Preval's program this afternoon includes a lunch with Dominican entrepreneurs. Preval will also visit the Dominican Senate and the Autonomous and Catholic University of Santo Domingo. As regards the weather here in Santo Domingo, like in Port-au-Prince, Santo Dominingo city is under a heay downpour. Fares Duverne from the presidential palace of Santo Domingo.

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Mexico: PAN Leads Demonstrations at Mexico City Airport

PA1203201896 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0400 GMT 9 Mar 96

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking of the Huejotzingo incidents, a few hours prior to electing his replacement, Carlos Castillo Peraza, who is still president of the PAN [National Action Party], headed an unprecedented demonstration at the Mexico City International Airport.

[Unidentified reporter] On the afternoon of 8 March, a rather unusual event took place at the Mexico City International Airport when demonstrator Castillo walked up and down the airport. In his walks, he handed out leaflets in Spanish and English to passengers and workers who were at the domestic and international concourses. In an interview, the PAN president pointed out that the Mexico City Airport is a good stage from which to report on the electoral irregularities that took place on 12 November in Puebla State.

[Begin Castillo recording, in progress] ...because many people leave for the countryside from here, and they can be informed of this. [end recording]

[Unidentified reporter] Castillo later left the airport, causing traffic jams due to the large number of people who gathered to see what was going on.

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Guatemala

Guatemala: Congress Approves Accord on Indigenous Peoples

PA1103000296 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2107 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Guatemala City, 5 Feb (ACAN-EFE) — Amid demonstrations staged by the leading indigenous people's organizations, the Guatemalan Congress today approved Agreement 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) on the rights of indigenous peoples.

The 75 deputies, out of 80, who attended the meeting unanimously approved the document after a three-hour debate. With this move, Guatemala becomes the eleventh country, including Latin American and European countries, to approve the agreement in favor of indigenous peoples.

Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Honduras, Mexico (the first one), Norway, Paraguay, and Peru have approved the document before Guatemala.

Agreement 169 will not come into effect, however, until 12 months after the executive branch, led by Conservative statesman Alvaro Arzu, submits the approved document to the ILO in Geneva.

Despite the skirmishes registered in Congress in favor of and against the approval, the issue had been determined since the early hours, when the ruling National Vanguard Party (PAN), with 42 of the 80 deputies, announced its decision to vote in favor of the controversial agreement.

The PAN bloc, whose view in this matter was divided, has been holding heated discussions since Monday afternoon in an attempt to reach a "consensus."

Agreement 169 was submitted to Congress in 1992 amid a complicated consultation process among the various indigenous peoples organizations representing the 23 ethnic groups of Mayan origin inhabiting this Central American country.

The two legislatures in Congress since then have delayed the agreement's approval despite the fact that they had approved it in the three debates established by internal law and that the Constitutionality Court had been consulted on possible violations of the Constitution by the ILO Pact.

Following the decision by the Constitutionality Court in favor of the agreement, discussion of each of the three articles of the legislative decree that approved it was still pending. This discussion took place during today's meeting.

Juan Leon, an indigenous peoples leader and former candidate of the leftist party New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG) for the vice presidency of Guatemala in the general elections of November 1995, has said he was pleased with the instrument's approval.

"It is important, because it guarantees the participation of the Mayan, Garifuna, and Xinca peoples and will bring benefits to all society and all the people who have not had access to such basic services as health and education," Leon has said.

Agreement 169, Leon has assured, "will broaden the practice of the Mayan culture, spirituality, and its participation in the country's political decisions."

While the debates were taking place, tens of indigenous peoples carried out the vigil called "Awaiting Daybreak" staged outside the Legislative Palace. This act symbolizes the conquests made by the indigenous peoples with an ancestral prophecy announcing the arrival of "dawn" or the time of splendor for the native culture of Central America (Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico), which includes the Mayans.

The sacred Mayan fire, stirred by incense, colorful candles, liquor, flower petals, and all the symbols of religious liturgy of the indigenous people remained lit all night long to pray for the people's "wellbeing."

Meanwhile, melodious litanies invoked in native tongues by six priests, accompanied by the traditional flute and drum, implored the "Heart of Heaven" and the "Heart of Earth" divinities to "touch" the hearts of the legislators and make them approve the agreement.

Ranking, prominent, indigenous peoples and leaders of the indigenous peoples, who constitute 60 percent of Guatemala's population of more than 10.5 million inhabitants, participated in this activity.

Despite their ideological differences, former Education Minister Celestino Tay, leaders of the indigenous peoples organizations, and the six members of the "Mayan parliamentary bloc," a common front created to promote the agreement, gathered around the fire.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua: PND Congress Elects Presidential Candidate

PA1203162096 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 10 Mar 96

[From the "620 Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Democratic Party [PND] held its first national congress yesterday afternoon and unanimously elected Alfredo Cesar as its candidate for the presidency of the Republic.

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However, in statements to "620 Newscast," the candidate for the position of PND national youth secretary challenged the elections, claiming that there had been no vote count at the moment of election, nor had there been any verification of the votes.

Let us listen to statements by PND presidential candidate Alfredo Cesar:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] What is your opinion of this first congress and the vote count process? Has any complaint been filed by specific congress members?

[Cesar] So far we have a challenge motion from ... [pauses]. Well, just imagine, we have had 11 candidates running for national office positions, in addition to the election of national deputies, deputies to the Central American Parliament, and an election for a presidential candidate. Out of all these electoral processes we have one challenge, which is related to the position of Youth Secretariat, where the vote count was carried out simply by raising hands.

In this respect, the losing candidate claims that the vote count should be repeated in a nominal manner. The complaint is perfectly viable, and we have all the registered delegates here to review this particular case. This is the only complaint; the other results have all fortunately been confirmed and accepted.

[Reporter] There has been talk of a public proclamation. Of what does that public proclamation to the political parties consist?

[Cesar] What it includes is a proposal to the other candidates to the presidency of the Republic for us to sign an agreement, similar to the one signed in El Salvador and Guatemala, that includes three points.

First point, agree to a commitment to carry out an ethical, sportsmanlike, constructive, and positive electoral campaign in the country, and not a destructive campaign of falsehood. The second commitment, to essentially respect the results of the October election. The third commitment is related to respecting the campaign funding guidelines included in the Electoral Law and whatever regulation the electoral council might decide to issue to verify the origins of funds. The people have the right to know. [end recording]

Panama

Panama: Presidency Minister Rejects Helms-Burton Bill

PA1203154196 Panama City EL UNIVERSAL DE PANAMA in Spanish 11 Mar 96 p A1

[Report by Gerardo Berroa]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panamanian Presidency Minister Raul Arango asserted yesterday that Panama wants to maintain its friendship with the United States but cannot accept any imposition due to its laws.

Arango, thus, echoed the Rio Group's rejection of the Helms-Burton bill, which attempts to punish citizens or companies of third countries who invest or trade with Cuba.

"We have an excellent and long-lasting friendship with the United States, and we want to preserve it. However, we cannot accept any imposition through laws presented by a senator who, perhaps, wants to impose sanctions that could, in a way, be very positive, but that we absolutely reject because the United States cannot intervene in our sovereignty as an independent nation," Arango asserted.

The minister added that Panama does not have to cut its commercial relations with Cuba; it has those relations and will continue to have them, and this has been duly clarified by Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo and Commerce Minister Nitzia de Villarreal.

Arango's statements join the ones made by businessmen and international law experts who assert that the Helms-Burton bill violates international law, the UN Charter, the OAS Charter, and goes against the WTO.

According to the Rio Group declaration, its members "condemn any attempt to establish sanctions or economic restrictions such as were included in the Liberty and Democratic Solidarity With Cuba Bill, better known as Helms-Burton."

Panama: Government Legislators Oppose Helms-Burton Bill

PA1303041396 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 12 Mar 96 p 24

[Report by Rogelio Antonio Cordova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Government legislators have pronounced their opposition to the Helms-Burton law, because it is considered to be an extraterritorial law that goes against the principles of the World Trade Organization.

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Former Foreign Minister Oyden Ortega said at the legislative chamber that the Helms-Burton law "violates the UN and OAS charters, because a country is using its governing body to impose obligations and prohibitions on citizens and companies of other countries."

Such a law, he asserted, undermines the principle of sovereignty — an attribute essential to each state — and, thus, we reject that law.

Legislator Ortega observed that "any change in the Republic of Cuba must be made by the country's internal authorities, because that is what international norms stipulate."

He underscored that the democratization of a country is to be made by the people and their government.

"We must admit that our countries require more democratization," the legislator stated and made reference to the doubts expressed by a high-level government official, who recently criticized the Church, because it — making use of the virtues of democracy — had criticized the current government administration for not having an aggressive policy to combat poverty.

Legislator Balbina Herrera reiterated the resolution approved by the Panamanian Parliament on 1 June 1995, condemning the above-mentioned bill.

Panama: Businessmen Warn Against Helms-Burton Bill

PA1203162596 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 9 Mar 96 p 3A

[FBIS Translated Text] The Panamanian business sector states that the Helms-Burton bill approval hardens the economic embargo against Cuba and is dangerous for international commercial relations.

Those statements were made after it was reported that the bill, which attempts to destroy Cuba's campaign to attract foreign investment, had been approved by the U.S. Congress.

On this issue, Ricardo Duran, executive director of the Pro-Panama organization, said that "everyone will look at what is most suitable and continue to trade with Cuba."

He added that they will have to be prepared to face the consequences resulting from the law approved by the United States this week, if they decide to do the latter.

The Mining Chamber was one of the first groups to react to the Helms-Burton bill approval. It stated that the United States must review this decision and hold a permanent dialogue that will allow world countries to understand each other without any type of coercive measures.

Panama: President Cites Policies for Foreign Investment

PA1203225896 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 9 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Jacqueline Clarke]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ernesto Perez Balladares yesterday promised to the Japanese industrial and commercial community established in Panama that bureaucracy would be eliminated and that there would be "clear rules of the games" and administrative openness.

The government's commitments are geared toward promoting and expediting the development of "private initiative in a climate of calm and coexistence," the Panamanian chief of state said.

He spotlighted the government's decision to guarantee a climate of calm for the development of several activities that "will jointly generate the prosperity and wellbeing to which all Panamanians and foreigners residing in the country have a right."

The president's statements were included in the presentation of his government's policies on security and peace for foreign investment and the operation of international corporations.

The meeting was attended by Japanese Ambassador Noritake Kai and representatives of Japanese companies such as Hitachi, Panasonic, Canon, Seiko, Aoki, Toshiba, Pioneer, Aiwa, Kenwood, Citizen, Yamaha, Sony, Sharp, Sanyo, and NTN Sudamericana.

National Police Director Jose Luis Sosa revealed several of the measures that will be taken to give "greater security" to the Colon Free Zone operation. He especially highlighted the measures for the highway between the cities of Panama and Colon.

The businessmen called on the government to improve the opportunities Panama affords as an international commercial center.

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Argentina

Argentina: Menem Views Talks With UK, Visit to London

PY1203191196 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1409 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 12 Mar (TELAM) — President Carlos Menem today expressed his approval of the negotiations with the UK that resulted in the recovery of the fees paid under protest by the Antarctic III, a vessel sailing under the Argentine flag. The Antarctic III was forced to pay these fees for fishing black hake in the South Georgias area.

Menem told Radio El Mundo: "I have issued instructions to keep calm and discuss with the British. The results are visible: The British have returned the fees to the Argentine vessel and this vessel is returning to its port of origin with the entire catch of black hake."

Menem also noted that he is "fully satisfied" with actions taken by Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella and the Foreign Ministry to solve this dispute.

The president again criticized "those 'falcons' who want a violent confrontation with the British, a confrontation that will result in absolutely nothing."

Asked if his visit to London will materialize, Menem indicated: "It all depends on the development of the current negotiations with the UK."

Menem said: "If I have to travel, if there are any chances of travelling, I will travel. If not, it is not a cause for concern." He emphasized: "I will not get upset over not having a chance to visit London. This is quite clear." [passage omitted]

Argentina: UK Ambassador Confirms Vessel Reimbursed

PY1303033196 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2353 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 12 Mar (TELAM) — During a meeting with Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today, Peter Hall, UK ambassador to Argentina, confirmed that the UK administrative officer stationed in South Georgia Island reimbursed the vessel Antarctic III, sailing under the Argentine flag, for the fees collected from it to license it to fish in the area.

The UK ambassador, who had been summoned by the foreign minister, arrived at the Foreign Ministry shortly after 1900 local time to offer an explanation of the event.

According to a report released by the Foreign Ministry Press Office, the meeting was conducted "on formal terms." Di Tella conveyed to Hall the Argentine Government's vexation at the attitude Britain showed with regard to the South Georgia Island's waters." [quotation marks as received]

Prior to this, Di Tella had received Marcelo Gonzalez, the local representative of American Seafood — the company that chartered the Antarctic III — at his office on the 14th floor of the Foreign Ministry. Gonzalez informed the foreign minister of the steps taken to obtain a refund on the fishing fees.

The official report states that Ambassador "Hall confirmed that the South Georgia Island administration reimbursed the Antarctic III the 70,000 pounds (equivalent to $110,000) that the Argentine vessel had paid under protest."

The Foreign Ministry report underscores that "in violation of the provisions of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources — to which both Argentina and Britain are signatories — the UK administration unilaterally intends to collect fishing licenses regulated by this Convention while Argentina reaffirms its sovereign rights to grant those fishing licenses."

The official report further states that "the information about the reimbursement of the fishing fees disclosed by the Foreign Ministry yesterday had been given to the Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food Secretariat by the company American Seafood on that same day by means of a note signed by the chairman of the company, Michael Nordby."

In his note, "Nordby pointed out that on 7 March, American Seafood USA requested that the license granted to the vessel Antarctic III be canceled and the amount paid for it reimbursed."

Nordby noted that "after some negotiations, the request was accepted and on 8 March, the South Georgia administrative officer ordered the repayment of the 70,000 pounds" to the company, headquartered in Seattle, the United States.

The Foreign Ministry report indicates that Argentine Ambassador to Britain Rogelio Pfirter, for his part, "was informed about the subject by Foreign Office [preceding two words in English] officials."

In relaying the news to the Argentine Foreign Ministry, Pfirter pointed out — according to the report in question — that the British officials told him that "having personally communicated with the highest authority of the South Georgia Island, they could confirm that the Antarctic III had been fully reimbursed for the fees it had paid and that it had left the area with its catch of fish."

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Argentina: Commentary Says UK Position 'Unacceptable'

PY1203144696 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 10 Mar 96 p 18

[Commentary: "British Ambitions in South Georgia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The British decision to charge a fishing fee in the area of the South Georgia island is unacceptable. The gesture must be answered with responsibility and a firmness in accordance with the need to defend our national territorial and economic interests.

In 1993 Great Britain unilaterally established a fishing reserve within 200 miles around the South Georgia island, a zone rich in fishing resources that is currently under dispute.

Our Foreign Ministry sent notes protesting the decision four different times, but the situation did not change.

On the contrary, Great Britain hardened its position and at the end of last week an Argentine flagged ship was forced to pay the unilaterally established fee. Other foreign ships also had the same luck.

The British decision is harmful on different counts. The most immediate one has economic importance because it forces Argentine ships to pay for fishing in disputed waters and because it would encourage foreign ships registered in our country to change flags.

The payment of a fee would also mean accepting that Great Britain has sovereignty over the zone and implicitly recognizing that Great Britain is a bordering power in the South Atlantic. This, in turn, would favor its position in the Malvinas Island conflict.

This is why is so important to firmly reject the British initiative in South Georgia and, particularly, the use of force to impose it.

The Argentine Government reacted against these circumstances by presenting formal protest notes to Great Britain and the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (Camelar) and suspending current talks for a long-term fishing agreement. The government will also submit a report on the incident to the UN secretary general. What happens in the next few days will give us a chance to make a more precise evaluation on the results of government initiatives.

For years the Argentine Foreign Ministry developed a strategy that gave priority to an approach with Great Britain, made repeated concessions, and launched "seduction" operations with the purpose, according to official reports, of creating a more propitious climate to negotiate the issue of Malvinas sovereignty.

This course of action permitted the country to make progress and materialize some economic agreements that are of undoubted importance, although at the cost of stagnating, and perhaps even taking a step backwards on the issue of Argentine sovereignty in the south.

The more daring British position in South Georgia and the Atlantic is a new indication of Argentina's weaknesses.

Argentina: Spanish Defense Chief Arrives on Visit

PY1203150796 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1346 GMT 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 11 Mar (TELAM) — Lieutenant General Jose Rodrigo Rodrigo, the Spanish defense chief of staff, arrived in this city today on an official four-day visit.

The Spanish defense chief of staff, who was invited by Joint Chief of Staff Mario Candido Diaz, will hold various working meetings and will visit military units, including the Argentine Collective Training Center for Peace Operations [Centro Argentino de Entrenamiento Conjunto para Operaciones de Paz] (Caecopaz), headquartered in Campo de Mayo.

General Rodrigo Rodrigo has also been scheduled to visit the Military College, the Navy School, and the Air Force School, with the goal of gaining insight on the curricula developed by these military institutes.

Gen. Rodrigo Rodrigo will meet Gen. Diaz on 12 March and will then participate in a lecture at the 'General Toscano' hall of the Joint Chief of Staff office to become acquainted with the mission and duties of the Argentine military institutions.

Argentina: Uruguay To Probe Accounts Linked to IBM Case

PY1303015296 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 1 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Uruguayan courts are investigating whether 11 Argentine citizens, who have been subject to close scrutiny by the U.S. Justice Department headed by Attorney General Janet Reno, have secret accounts with Uruguayan banks. The list, to which the newspaper LA PRENSA had access, comprises Alberto Kohan, secretary general of the Presidency; former [Peronist] Senator Jose Octavio Bordon; Aldo Dadone, former Argentine National Bank president; Juan Carlos Cattaneo, former deputy secretary general of the Presidency; Rodolfo Gabrielli, former Mendoza Province

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governor and current [Peronist] deputy; Martan Trade Company President Jose Ignacio Garcia; Ricardo Martorana, Javier Orcoyen, Gustavo Soriani, and Hector Neira, former managers of IBM's subsidiary in Argentina; and Wilmer Gueicamburu, current president of IBM's subsidiary in Argentina.

This long list that includes government officials, former government officials, congressmen, and businessmen was part of the letters rogatory the U.S. attorney general sent to Uruguayan Judge Gerardo Peduzzi within the framework of the probe the U.S. Justice Department is conducting into the alleged payoffs by IBM to obtain contracts from the Argentine Government — a LA PRENSA exclusive published in its edition of 24 February. [passage omitted]

On 26 February, Uruguayan Criminal Prosecutor Hugo Barrios Acevedo accepted Judge Peduzi's request to clear the letters rogatory sent by the U.S. Justice Department and acceded to undertaking the investigation.

Barrios Acevedo told a Buenos Aires radio station on 1 March that "the probe has just started because the data submitted by the U.S. Justice Department are incomplete." [passage omitted]

Argentina: Article on Menem, Cavallo 'Power Relationship'

PY1203150996 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 8 Mar 96 p 4

[Article by Eduardo van der Kooy]

[FBIS Translated Text] The removal of Postmaster General Haroldo Grisanti from office — which was announced by President Carlos Menem during a radio program on 6 March — and the establishment of a Communications Secretariat, which will include agencies that were formerly within the orbit of the Economy Ministry has laid bare a **new power relationship between the president and [Economy Minister] Domingo Cavallo.**

Argentines perhaps will be able to belatedly observe the **reverberations** of the extremely grave crisis in which Menem and Cavallo were involved last August and October.

In other words, the head of state is **incontestably winning** the arm wrestling in which he has pitted himself against his economy minister since the Convertibility Plan became the driving force behind his administration's political successes. Cavallo might have decided to replace the confrontation strategy he employed until October of last year — and to which he hinted at resorting once again 10 days ago when he said that businessman Alfredo Yabran may have him killed — with **forbearance tactics, even if this entails forgoing important shares of power.**

The president's audacity has several explanations. The one that sounds more plausible indicates that Menem and his followers are convinced that the **aura of confidence** that Cavallo seemed to have about him **no longer has the strength it conveyed to the public before.**

Cavallo's most recent imbroglio — when his income tax return was leaked to the press — furnished an excuse to subject him to careful scrutiny. Two public opinion polls conducted by Julio Aurelio and Hugo Haime showed that nearly **60 percent of those surveyed** in Buenos Aires and greater Buenos Aires trusted more in the validity of the charges leveled against Cavallo than in the counteroffensive launched by the economy minister to try to neutralize those charges.

According to this line of reasoning, **Cavallo's main political asset — an asset which ensured his stability even in the worst of moments — seems to be shrinking.** Despite some attempts — made by Raul Granillo Ocampo, Argentine ambassador in the United States, and Chief of Cabinet Eduardo Bauza —Menemism has been unable, however, to weaken the **tremendous support the minister continues to command abroad.**

The stir that caused the praises the French finance minister heaped on Cavallo in Paris has not yet been forgotten. Not to mention the term "**hero**" that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher used to describe the minister's doings.

Menem considered another detail before making use of his gardening shears — leaving aside his alleged and better predisposition, Cavallo **does not seem to be strong enough from a political standpoint** to become a threat to the ruling party. If Cavallo toyed with the idea of jumping ship, the difficult economic situation prevalent in the country now would not be a favorable element especially considering that his credibility may be on the downward path. **Cavallo's political destiny seems to be at present summed up in this equation.**

Perhaps the economy minister resolved not to give another battle because he is well aware of this reality.

Cavallo thus accepted without a word the removal of Grisanti from office and also Bauza's suggestions for the candidate to replace him and his proposal to establish a Communications Secretariat.

The economy minister seems determined to respect that political style at least **until the economic situation improves.** Still, he always runs the risk that his temperament will betray him.

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Argentina: Menem Denies 'Trimming' of Cavallo's Powers

PY1303114596 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1909 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 8 Mar (TELAM) — President Carlos Menem today emphasized that the establishment of the Communications Secretariat, under the Presidency of the Nation, does not involve trimming the Economy Ministry's powers. He noted that the new secretariat had already been established in the ministries' bill.

Menem denied the reports alleging that this measure involves "trimming the power" of the Economy Ministry. He emphasized: "There is only one person here who holds power in the Argentine Republic as a result of the people's mandate: the president of the nation."

Menem told Radio 990: "The president's powers have been established by the Constitution. And, within this framework, the president has asked for additional powers to continue to make progress on the state reform, as established in the bill that was sent to Congress in due time."

Menem added: "I would ask from the journalists that they read the ministries' bill and they will see that the communications area will be placed directly under the president of the nation."

Menem emphasized: "Nevertheless, a lot of fuss has been made. There is idle talk on a number of situations. This idle talk is merely detrimental to Argentina. And, if this goal is being pursued, I disagree with it."

The president pointed out: "A long time ago I submitted the ministries' bill to Congress. The ministries' bill establishes that the communications area will be placed directly under the Presidency of the Nation." [passage omitted]

Bolivia

Bolivia: President, Ministers React To U.S. Certification

PY1303014996 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 2 Mar 96 Section 1 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] In Santa Cruz on 1 March, Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada welcomed the full certification that the U.S. Government extended to his administration acknowledging the results of drug enforcement and excess coca eradication programs in 1995.

Sanchez de Lozada, whose administration received an ultimatum from the Clinton administration in March 1995 for lack of compliance with coca eradication agreements, said that "Bolivia was certified because it complied with its own laws; namely, Law No. 1008, which calls for the eradication of 5,000 to 8,000 hectares every year."

The Bolivian President said that the certification Bolivia received has saved it from a possible suspension of foreign aid.

"Bolivia has complied with its own law; it has given proof of its trustworthiness, but we never agreed to terms that went against our own laws," Sanchez de Lozada said in Santa Cruz shortly after receiving the information about the certification.

He did acknowledge, however, that the struggle against drug trafficking "is complex and difficult" and that the international community must help out to provide options to small farmers. He reiterated that the eradication must be implemented through "dialogue and consensus, without any violence."

Bolivia's certification does not imply that the United States will resume its aid to prop up Bolivia's balance of payments, aid which in the past was used to compensate coca farmers. The Bolivian Government, however, expects some positive follow-up from the United States.

Bolivian Foreign Minister Antonio Aranibar said in La Paz that he was very pleased because Bolivia has passed the drug enforcement test, adding that it was hardly a surprise given that Bolivia did everything it could to fulfill eradication targets. Through December 1995 Bolivia managed to eradicate 5,400 hectares of excess coca plantations, although in the process seven people were killed and clashes with coca farmers took place.

The foreign minister optimistically announced that from now on the reduction of excess coca plantations will be more closely tied to alternative development.

He stated that Bolivia will make every possible effort to obtain the aid for the balance of payments so that the results of coca reduction programs "can be rightly attributed to shared responsibility."

As the official in charge of the eradication plans, Minister of Government Carlos Sanchez Berzain made no effort to hide his satisfaction. He said, however, that the results would not have been achieved without the help of the peasants.

"I freely admit it: Chapare peasants who belong to associations, grass-roots unions, or other organizations have cooperated." Sanchez Berzain emphasized that despite the death of seven peasants, the social cost of eradication is not as high as in other countries.

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He stated that the U.S. certification is very important because now Bolivia has dropped to the third place as far as production of coca and cocaine is concerned. It has been surpassed by Colombia, which did not receive an approval from Clinton and his team.

"Bolivia is no longer among the countries which lack proper drug enforcement mechanisms.... We should be pleased with ourselves," Sanchez Berzain said.

Bolivia: Statement on Decertification 'Misinterpreted'

PY1203133296 La Paz Radio Cadena Nacional Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada has explained that the countries forming the brand-new Andean Community did not raise their voice against the unilateral U.S. decertification of Colombia, but confirmed their political decision to continue the struggle against drug trafficking and to coordinate specific activities in this area.

After meeting his Ecuadoran, Colombian, Venezuelan, Panamanian, and Peruvian counterparts in Trujillo, the president emphasized that the joint declaration on this issue had been misinterpreted.

Direct support was not voiced, but rather a political decision was made to pursue drug enforcement within the framework of a new organization based in Panama, Sanchez de Lozada explained. [passage omitted]

Bolivia: Antidrug Struggle Independent of U.S. Urged

PY1203141596 La Paz Radio Cadena Nacional Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nationalist Democratic Action Deputy Guido Camacho on 11 March said that Latin American countries are used to the U.S. empire's policy of imposition.

Camacho made this remark on the resolution issued by the Andean Pact member countries on U.S. certification or decertification of coca crop eradications.

Camacho noted that a long time ago the United States left aside the shared-responsibility policy on the delicate drug trafficking issue. Not a single resolution, as warranted as it may be, will shake the foundations of U.S. cynicism and U.S. antinarcotics policy worldwide, he noted.

In this regard, it is necessary for the nations subjected to this draconian policy to strive to achieve internal unity to confront drug trafficking on their own, with the goal of reducing their dependence from the United States. Thus, political independence will be achieved, not only in the field of drug trafficking, but in the field of U.S. economic impositions, he added.

Bolivia: Drug Strategy Supports 'Shared Responsibility'

PY1203235096 Cochabamba LOS TIEMPOS in Spanish 28 Feb 96 p A5

[FBIS Translated Text] The Rio Group will defend before international fora the principles of shared responsibility and alternative development as essential elements of the Latin American position and strategy on drug trafficking.

This determination is part of the agreement approved yesterday by the national coordinators of the 14 Latin American member countries that form the Rio Group during the Second Meeting on Drugs and Associated Crimes that ended in Cochabamba.

Jaime Aparicio, Bolivia's foreign affairs secretary and national coordinator, said that the two elements mentioned here are very important for Bolivia because they will permit this country to overcome structural weaknesses and leave the strictly bilateral field where Bolivia is more vulnerable.

This hemispheric vision will be presented at the meeting of the Inter—American Committee for the Control of Drugs and Drug Abuse (CICAD) — an organization subordinated to the OAS — in Washington, on 4 March as well as at the Sixth Meeting of Rio Group and EU Foreign Ministers in Cochabamba on 16 April.

The Rio Group will sustain this position at the meeting of the Narcotics Commission in Vienna (Austria) next April, as well as in upcoming UN General Assemblies and the OAS General Assembly. The issue will also be included in the Strategy Against Drug Trafficking for the 21st century.

Aparicio said that the Rio Group based its position on a document approved in Quito, Ecuador, last September, establishing guidelines for action to fight the impact of drug trafficking impacts at all levels.

Creation of a Sub Group

Aparicio reported that Rio Group representatives created a work subgroup that will gather all existing contributions and summarize a position for initial presentation at the CICAD meeting, where Bolivia will represent the Rio Group.

Later, and within the framework of this OAS organization, representatives will start working on a continental drug trafficking strategy.

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Aparicio said the concept of "shared responsibility" points at the international community and seeks to convince countries to consider the issue of drug trafficking as a global problem.

"From an integral point of view the problem has many aspects, because drug trafficking not only involves consumption or production; it also involves the passage of precursors, international crime networks that distribute the drug, money laundering.... all these problems are being studied as a whole. We must enforce, confirm, and strengthen this principle," Aparicio said.

The Bolivian national coordinator said that the concept of "alternative development" is another basic item in need of a new form and momentum. In Bolivia, it is a very important concept due to the social problems surrounding it, Aparicio said.

"We (Rio Group member countries) agree that supply and demand must be reduced. We must work at both ends through systems that will effectively deal with both problems," Aparicio said.

The secretary added that the Rio Group expects the United States to look at these proposals because negotiations on drug trafficking for the 21st century that are still in the preliminary stage include the concept of alternative development that the United States and the EU have been supporting.

"What we are currently trying to define are new models and fields of action that increase states' involvement and produce better results," the secretary outlined.

Aparicio said the document that the second meeting on drugs will approve should be balanced and reflect the problem's integral concept, within the framework of a position of solidarity on coinciding principles among Rio Group members.

"We must set aside past problems such as the separation of countries exclusively between victims and responsible parties, producers and consumers. Consumption affects us all. It is a health problem here as well as in Europe. Drug trafficking affects nations used for transit, producers and consumers, nations that produce precursors and where there is laundering of the money derived from that crime," the secretary concluded.

Bolivia: MIR Allegedly Received Drug Money for Campaigns

PY1303014796 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2047 GMT 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] La Paz, 29 Feb (EFE) — A witness for the prosecution confirmed today that the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), former Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora's party, received drug-related money for financing its electoral campaigns.

Witness Miguel Lobo Maidana, a right-hand man of the MIR top leaders, testified today before an antinarcotics court that is trying Oscar Eid [Franco], who was the MIR president from 1989 to 1991, for concealment and complicity.

Lobo Maidana declared that he was an eyewitness to one of the deliveries and was tasked with carrying a briefcase, with another delivery, from Santa Cruz to La Paz.

The witness, a sociologist by profession, emphasized that he was a member of the MIR La Paz Department political committee and that, as a member of this committee, he found out about [drug lord Jorge] Roca Suarez' and [drug lord Isaac] Chavarria's financing of MIR activities.

The witness, who claimed that he was the right-hand man of the MIR top leaders, emphatically told the judges that convicted drug trafficker Jorge Roca Suarez, aka "Techo de Paja," and alleged drug trafficker Isaac Chavarria, who died in November, had delivered money allocated for financing the MIR campaigns in the 1980's.

Between May and June 1985, Roca Suarez, who is serving a 30-year sentence in California, subsequently delivered $150,000, $60,000, and between $100,000 and $120,000 to Paz Zamora and Oscar Eid [Franco].

In August 1987, Chavarria delivered in Santa Cruz another $60,000 to finance the MIR political campaign in that region, Lobo Maidana said. He added that MIR leader Guillermo Capobianco, Paz Zamora's interior minister from 1989 to 1991, delivered to him an all-terrain vehicle that Chavarria donated to the party in May 1987. Lobo Maidana emphasized that the license plates and color of the vehicle, which was initially received by Fernando Cajias, the former Bolivian ambassador to Spain in 1992, were changed.

Lobo Maidana further stated that in November 1988, he collected $90,000 from Capobianco's home in Santa Cruz and that it was on this occasion that he last saw Chavarria.

The witness for the prosecution moreover confirmed that in 1986, during a meeting at Deputy Jorge Kohler's home in Beni Department, Chavarria put three light aircraft at MIR's disposal so that MIR leaders could canvass the region.

Both Eid Franco's attorney and the MIR deputies implicated in this case challenged the veracity of Lobo

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Maidana's testimony, which they termed contradictory and "badly mounted."

Paz Zamora ruled Bolivia from 1989 to 1993. According to the prosecution charges against Paz Zamora's aide [illegible], the former president was also accused of [illegible] links with several persons who have been [illegible] of drug trafficking crimes and are now serving [illegible]ces.

Brazil

Brazil: Daily Criticizes 'Stiffer' U.S. Cuban Sanctions

PY1203164496 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 10 Mar 96 Section 1 p 2

[Editorial: "The Law of the Stronger"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Senate on 6 March approved a law making the sanctions against Cuba even stiffer, and making more absurd the double standard that Washington shows in its international relations.

The embargo is quite unfortunate for two basic reasons, one of which would be enough for disqualifying it: It violates foreign sovereignty. The principle of nonintervention should not be broken, under penalty of allowing stronger countries to impose their will on weaker countries.

Yet the embargo is also a contradiction with the U.S. behavior — for example — with China, which enjoys a preferential status in its trade with the United States, despite the fact that its regime is as dictatorial as the Cuban regime.

Furthermore, the new U.S. law has assigned to the United States — without the approval of any other nation — the role of international trade policeman, disregarding the regulations of the WTO (World Trade Organization), which was created with the help of the United States itself.

The U.S. law now authorizes sanctions against entrepreneurs from any other part of the world who decide to make investments in Cuba.

This attitude harms international law. This situation, plus the economic interests that were affected by the law, have awakened some reactions — still very timid, though — from traditional U.S. partners, like European Union countries.

The fact that the Cuban regime may be criticized is no excuse for this type of sanction. It does not empower Washington to decide where each country or enterprise should invest either.

The relative silence of the other countries is as deplorable as the U.S. decisions.

The lack of reaction suggests that everyone agrees to this updated version of the law of the stronger, by which the most powerful issues the commands and the others obey.

Brazil: Daily Views U.S. Cuban Stance During Elections

PY1203165196 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 11 Mar 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Embers of War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN Security Council has unanimously approved a resolution whereby it "deeply laments the downing, by the Cuban Air Force, of two civil planes on 24 February, which seems to have resulted in the death of four people." In the United States, some people may have been disappointed, because the council lamented instead of strongly condemning.

The United Nations' cautious language probably took into account the activities of anti-Castroist organizations headquartered in Miami, which some months ago made a flight over Havana. On that occasion, the Cuban Government advised that any other attempt to invade its airspace would prompt the downing of the invader.

The NEW YORK TIMES has quite rightly criticized this "fast trigger" policy of Fidel Castro. Even if it is confirmed that the planes, when they were downed, were actually overflying Cuban territory, there are many ways of warning an invader before resorting to a radical action.

At the same time, it is necessary to admit that the incident is linked with an artificial state of affairs, and that if such situation persists, similar misunderstandings are likely to occur.

The Cuban Government feels that the effects of economic collapse are becoming increasingly stronger. Castroism, which has not lost all sense of perception of reality, has adopted — its own way and not very enthusiastically — a flexible attitude, at least if compared to the ideological intransigence of the past.

Cuba is not trying to imitate Chinese juggling, which seeks to produce a market society under strict political control. Fidel Castro does not want openings in the economic system. He would only agree to arrangements that could bring strong currency to Cuba, expanding a bit the desperately narrow labor market.

Yet not even those arrangements are made without diversion maneuvers on the part of Havana. For Fidel,

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the confrontation with the United States provides the excuse he needs to justify the failure of his regime; this explains why, in a context that seemed to be marked by a gradual easing of tension, the Cuban Government has very recently hardened its position toward dissidents, some of whom were arrested (and then released after a short time in prison).

Cuban exiles are familiar with all this. It is obvious that it is to their advantage to make tension grow even further, in order to reach a rapid — even if traumatic — solution eliminating the Communist regime that was installed more than 30 years ago.

The Clinton Government cannot be soft on a situation that has a strong political connotation. In a year in which he will seek reelection against a Republican candidate, who — whoever the candidate — will advocate a hardening on the Caribbean — Bill Clinton cannot afford to ignore the community of Cuban exiles, which has a considerable number of votes and which has countless allies in the United States.

At some point, however, this dark performance will have to end. There are good reasons to believe that, once the elections are over, a probably reelected Clinton administration will find ways to smooth this anachronistic cold war.

This will be done not for the purpose of being courteous with Castro, but because natural paths are the best alternative to show Cubans that an era is coming to an end and that the future is here to stay.

Brazil: Cuban Foreign Official To Visit, Brief Lampreia

PY1203220896 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 12 Mar 96 p 5

[Report by Luiz Orlando Carneiro]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia — Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Jorge Bolanos will arrive in Brasilia on 24 March. He will personally brief Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia on the Cuban Government's position regarding the downing of two U.S. civilian planes by Cuban MiG fighters on 24 February.

Bolanos would also like to sound out the Brazilian reaction to the Helms-Burton bill, which was already passed by the U.S. Congress and which President Clinton is expected to sign into law today. The bill will expand the U.S. trade embargo on Havana to include sanctions against foreign companies trading with the Fidel Castro regime. Bolanos had served earlier as Cuban ambassador to Brazil.

Brazil: Article Views Upcoming Lampreia-Kantor Meeting

PY1303032496 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 7 Mar 96 p A4

[Article by Maria Helena Tachinardi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brazil will ask the United States to put aside old antidumping lawsuits related to Brazilian steel exports to the United States. The issue will be discussed on 19 March in Brasilia during a meeting between Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia and U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

They will talk about the recent trade deficit registered by Brazil in its bilateral trade with the United States and the difficulties of access for Brazilian exports to the U.S. market. Lampreia does not see any possibility that the United States will reduce its high import tariffs imposed on Brazilian orange juice exports, but he believes that he will have solid arguments to ask the United States to lift to antidumping lawsuits that harm Brazilian steel exports. The "sunset clause" [preceding two words in English] approved during the Uruguay Round of talks that created the WTO foresees the putting aside of antidumping lawsuits.

U.S. subsidies on chicken exports, within the framework of the Export Enhancement Program [preceding three words in English] (EEP) also harms Brazilian chicken exports abroad. Lampreia said that this subject will be discussed during the meeting that will take place on 23 and 24 April in Singapore to prepare the first interministerial meeting of the WTO, which will also take place in that country in December. The WTO members will make an assessment of its actions two years after the initiation of its implementation, together with the agricultural subsidies.

Lampreia stressed the "positive agenda" between Brazil and the United States during the recent visit to Brazil of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Lampreia pointed out that the two countries continue to disagree on four points. Brazil is against the U.S. economic embargo on Cuba; does not intend to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT); favors a reform in the United Nations that does not include the dissolution of organizations like the UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development], currently headed by Ambassador Rubens Ricupero; and opposes U.S. cooperation in drug enforcement actions explicitly interfering with national sovereignty.

The foreign minister yesterday said that President Fernando Henrique Cardoso will soon announce a new drug enforcement policy that is being prepared among Itamaraty [Brazilian Foreign Ministry], the Justice Ministry,

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and the Armed Forces. The government is worried about the increase in drug trafficking in Brazil after drug enforcement has been intensified in the neighboring countries.

Regarding this subject, however, Brazil and the United States recently began to have a similar view. The U.S. Government placed in "slow motion" the implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), scheduled to begin operating in 2005, after the U.S. Congress denied President Bill Clinton authorization to sign the free trade agreement with Chile. Brazil, which always defended a slow pace for the formation of the FTAA and which prefers a gradual integration among the economic blocs of the continent, is satisfied with the position of the United States. The subject will be discussed in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia) by the commerce ministers of 34 countries of the region on 20 and 21 March.

The Cardoso administration will have to conduct in "slow motion" efforts involving the Brazilian aspiration to hold a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Lampreia acknowledges the difficulties in reforming this organization because countries that reject increasing the number of permanent members, including Pakistan and Italy ("much less Argentina"), are delaying the discussion in the United Nations.

Pakistan is the rival of India; Italy and Argentina do not want Germany and Brazil as permanent members of the UN Security Council. Thus, the subject has cooled down in the United Nations. UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali informed Brazil of this situation last week in Brasilia. Cardoso already announced that he will not attend the UN General Assembly this year.

On 6 March Lampreia said that being a permanent member of the UN Security Council "is not a main priority for Brazil" because that organization does not deal with economic subjects. He admits, nonetheless, that the inclusion of Brazil in the Security Council would give "prestige" to Brazil. "It would be a kind of super ISO [International Standardization Organization] 9000," he said, referring to the principal certificate that a product can receive for its quality.

Brazil: Cardoso Faced With 'Diplomatic Problem' in Japan

PY1303010896 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 12 Mar 96

[Report by correspondent Ana Paulo Padrao in Tokyo]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has arrived in Japan and right away he has to face a diplomatic problem. The problem has something to do with the distrust the Japanese have in business.

Brazilian businessmen know this story very well. Sixty of them are in Japan trying to resume negotiations that have been stalled for months.

[Begin recording] [Brazilian businessman Carlos Alberto Nakamura, identified by caption] It is not easy to negotiate with the Japanese because they make many demands. They need to gain confidence in Brazilian businessmen. [end recording]

Japanese industrialists still do not trust Brazil sufficiently to make large investments.

The visit of a Brazilian delegation seemed to be a perfect opportunity to break the ice. However, the government made a blunder involving protocol. Brazil announced beforehand a practically guaranteed $1.5 billion loan from the Japanese Government to finance several projects. Now President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who disembarked in Tokyo tonight, will have to straighten out this diplomatic blunder.

Brazil: Motta Offers 'Concrete Opportunities' in Japan

PY1203224696 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 11 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Claudia Safatale]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tokyo — Communications Minister Sergio Motta arrived in Tokyo on 8 March with a very clear mission: To offer Japanese telecommunications enterprises the area that was opened to private investment in the program for expansion and recuperation of telecommunications. In the evening of 9 March, he made the first deal, which, although small — 20 million reals — was a good start. Motta signed a technology transfer contract with Furukwa, which is already operating an industrial unit in Curitiba. Furukwa will receive technology from the research and development center of Telebras [Brazilian Telecommunications, Inc.], to produce fiber optic cables. To this end, the Curitiba unit will be expanded with investment totaling $20 million.

With the technology from the Telebras center, the Japanese enterprise will produce fiber optic cables for the Brazilian market, paying royalties to Telebras. On 13 March, the minister will address Japan's 100 major entrepreneurs. With videos, CD-ROM and all the government plans, Motta wants to convince the cautious Japanese enterprises to participate in the investment of $37.5 billion in the sector up to 1999.

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It will not be an easy task, because Japan is experiencing an unprecedented financial crisis, with a deficit surpassing $400 billion.

It is also a country that still regards Brazil with a certain parsimony. Despite the success of the stabilization program and the fact that its external accounts are duly paid, the Japanese do not forget the annoyance they suffered with the foreign debt crisis, the moratorium, and the comings and goings of the past Brazilian administrations in terms of relations with Japan. This is a bad impression that President Cardoso expects to change with his visit, which begins on 12 March.

"I did not come here to ask for anything. I have come to offer concrete opportunities for good investments," Motta said. Enthusiastic, he said he has told Japanese businessmen — who normally take a long time to decide — the following: "Hurry up because I am offering the same to the Americans, Germans, and the French."

In order not to run into the same problem as Argentina — which sold the public telecommunications sector to foreign public companies — Motta reported that he is negotiating with Deputy Aroldo de Oliveira, rapporteur of the bill in the Chamber of Deputies, an article prohibiting the participation of foreign public companies in investments open to the private sector in the fields of cellular telephone, satellite, and data communications services. Following Tokyo, Motta will travel to New York on 15 March to carry out the same task with U.S. businesmen.

Brazil: Article Assesses Trade Opportunities With Japan

PY1203140596 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 8 Mar 96 p A10

[Article by Livia Ferrari]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Fernando Henrique Cardoso will arrive in Japan next week aware of the opportunities to increase Brazilian exports to Japan. He is aware of the fact that the composition of Brazilian exports to that market is strongly concentrated in raw materials and products with low-added value. Statistics reveal that hardly 15 main exports to Japan correspond to 70 percent of the total exports to that country. Of those, 40 percent are raw materials.

A study carried out by the National Confederation of Industry (CNI) among its associated industries, identifies the most important commercial aspects in the bilateral relations between the two countries. It points out products in which Brazil, whose sales are incipient, has a great competitive capability.

Food products head the list of goods with favorable conditions to increase Brazilian exports to Japan. According to CNI Foreign Trade Department (Decex) experts, it is expected that Japan will steadily increase its imports of agricultural and livestock products as result of an improved standard of living. Brazil so far has not exploited this market appropriately. Japan imports $40 billion worth of food per year, of which only $600 million come from Brazil.

Food products with the greatest potential include coffee, processed beef, chicken meat, fresh fruit, and concentrated juice. The CNI experts have a diagnosis of the market situation for each of those products. They recall that Japan is the third largest coffee importer in the world. The average increase of coffee imports has been 2 percent per year. Brazil is the second largest exporter of coffee, in volume, to Japan. However, Brazil still faces difficulties in increasings its exports mainly because of the competition of Indonesian exports.

As for processed beef, Japan mostly demands specialties adapted to its local taste. Brazilian canned "corned beef" is popular in the Japanese market, although it is has been suffering from competition with the same product from Taiwan since 1993. According to the CNI experts, Brazil can exploit "corned beef" to introduce other specialties in the Japanese market.

There is a wide range of opportunities for Brazil also in the market of fresh fruits. Japanese fruit imports amount to 1.4 billion per year, with 12 main kinds. Bananas are responsible for more than 50 percent of fresh fruit imports. Japan, however, has several restrictions on fresh fruit imports, including quotas, sanitary and quarantine requirements.

Brazil: Shots Fired at Brasilia Governor's Office

PY1103175996 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 1615 GMT 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Early this morning, three bullets hit Buriti Palace, the office of Federal District Governor Cristovam Buarque. The governor believes the incident was an act of retaliation by drug traffickers.

Seven bullets were fired at Buriti Palace, three of which hit Buarque's office, while the others broke windows on the ground floor. The bullets damaged furniture, ceilings, and in entrance hall panels.

Palace guards reported that the shots were fired at 0430 from a white Volkswagen that reduced speed and had its lights off.

The results of the investigation are expected for 12 March.

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Guards had already advised Governor Buarque to wear a bulletproof vest. He has received threats over the past few days. All this was caused by a drug enforcement campaign that the Federal District Government will implement as of 13 March. The governor has no doubts about who fired the shots. He blamed drug traffickers, and reacted with indignation.

[Begin Buarque recording] If, as I and everybody else believe, this has something to do with drugs, my reaction will be indignation over those people's shamelessness and over the power they think they have. [end recording]

Brazil: Lawmakers Concerned Over Telecom Regulations

PY0803152696 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 22 Feb 96 p A6

[Report by Isabel Versiani]

[FBIS Translated Text] The restrictions on the entry of foreign capital into telecommunications enterprises is the most controversial topic in the bill regulating the privatization of satellite and cellular telephone services. Yet it is not the only controversial issue. Some lawmakers are also concerned about opening the market before creating the organ that will regulate the sector. This will happen only after the approval of the General Law of Telecommunications, which has not yet even been submitted to Congress.

Deputy Arolde de Oliveira (PFL-RJ) [Liberal Front Party-Rio de Janeiro], the rapporteur of the project, said: "Until there is a regulatory organ, Telebras [Brazilian Telecommunications, Inc.] will fulfill that function, but this seems improbable, because it will be competing with private enterprises." The deputy is considering including in his proposal the creation of the regulatory organ which, according to the government idea, should be economically and administratively independent from the Communications Ministry.

The proposal drawn up by the Communications Ministry is concise. It sets forth that the term for concessions of satellite and cellular services is 15 years, renewable for another 15 years. In the case of cellular services, it establishes that the concession will be granted through a tender, and that the authorizations that have already been granted by the Land Mobile Radio Communication Service will be automatically transformed into cellular service concessions. For the two services, the proposal restricts the participation of foreign capital, in concessionaire enterprises, to 49 percent of voting shares.

Minister Sergio Motta claims this restriction was established not because of ideological reasons but merely to strengthen the position of Brazil before the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), which is debating the terms of an international reciprocity agreement on the issue. The idea is that all signatory countries should establish similar restrictions on foreign capital.

One of Motta's advisers said: "If Brazil sets no restrictions, it will unable to negotiate at the ITU," recalling that many countries today have some restrictions of that type. The United States, France, and Japan are among those countries. In France, enterprises rendering telecommunication services can have, at most, 20 percent of voting shares in the hands of countries other than EU members. The United States imposes restrictions on the participation of foreign capital for radio and cellular phone licenses. In Japan, telecommunication enterprises having their own facilities can only have minority shares in foreign hands.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Services	How they are now	How they will be
Cellular	Exploitation is restricted to the Telebras system and the four other independent companies (CRT, CTBS, Ceterp and Sercontel), on the A frequency band.	The project sets a 15-year concession term, renewable for another 15-year period, limiting the participation of foreign capital to 49 percent of voting shares.
Satellites	Exploitation of the service is a monopoly of Embratel [Brazilian Telecommunications Company].	Private enterprises may exploit the service under concessions as of 1998. The term of the concession and the limits to foreign capital are those valid for the cellular service.
Data Transmission	A monopoly of Embratel.	Other enterprises may render the service, but using the network, which will be controlled by Embratel.

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Chile

Chile: Rejection of U.S. Law Prepared With Rio Group

PY1203222196 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 9 Mar 96 p C2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Chilean Foreign Ministry has reported that, together with member countries of the Rio Group, it is preparing a statement in which it strongly rejects the approval by the U.S. Congress of the Helms-Burton bill that reinforces the economic embargo on Cuba, due to the downing of two U.S. civilian planes.

According to sources from the Foreign Ministry, the U.S. initiative violates the rules and principles of international law as well as the statutes of the WTO.

The statement that is being prepared says that "member countries of the Rio Group (a political consultative organization comprised of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, and Uruguay) are worried about the scope of the bill, which ignores the essential principle of respect for the sovereignty of the states, and the implementation of which implies extraterritorial implementation of an internal law, in opposition to international law."

For the promulgation of this bill, only the House of Representatives needs to approve it. Morever, President Bill Clinton has minimized international criticism and reaffirmed his intention to promulgate the bill next week, stating that it is in keeping with international law.

According to the Chilean Foreign Ministry, the bill violates the spirit of friendship and cooperation that must prevail in relations among countries of the hemisphere, as well as freedom of trade.

So as to have a better understanding of the Helms-Burton bill, Chilean Ambassador to the United States John Biehl already submitted a report on the matter to the Foreign Ministry.

Chile: FACh Commander on U.S. Presence at Aerospace Fair

PY1203234296 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 9 Mar 96 p C5

[FBIS Translated Text] General Fernando Rojas Vender, commander in chief of the Chilean Air Force [FACh], has stressed the presence of more than 400 participants — particularly from the United States — in the new version of the International Aerospace Fair [FIDAE], which will be dedicated tomorrow, and which, according to predictions, will be a total success.

Based on the letter President Bill Clinton sent to U.S. businessmen in the aeronautics area, who were invited to participate in the FIDAE '96, Gen. Rojas Vender reaffirms the fact that the fair in Cerrillos is still the most important on the continent and one of the three best in the world.

"For the benefit of the people of the United States, I am very pleased to extend my good wishes to those who are participating in FIDAE '96. International fairs like this play a vital role in the development of international trade," the letter sent by Clinton on 19 January states.

Gen. Rojas Vender said that this level of support for the participation of several hundred businessmen from throughout the world, including several outstanding figures, guarantees the success of the fair.

He said: "I interpret the U.S. support as a reunion of that country with the Latin American markets which were lost over the past few years."

Within that framework, Rojas Vender recalled that among the airplanes the FACh is continuously seeking as replacements for its aircraft, the U.S. F-16 is one of the possibilities, given the fact that the latest version of this aircraft is very close to the type of aircraft the institution wants.

He explained that the FACh will always try to improve itself structurally, and that there are several alternatives in the world that meet the characteristics of the F-16.

Morever, Gen. Rojas Vender referred to the Fasat-Bravo satellite the FACh is building, which will be ready by the end of October. He explained that due to lauching problems, it will probably be launched by the beginning of 1997.

"If we have the resources before that, we will do it, but at this moment we are not sure about the launcher because there are few scheduled for this year," he said.

On the presence of the NASA at the FIDAE '96, Rojas Vender said that it will favor the establishment of trade agreements. Nevertheless, more could have been done if Chile had a space agency that could talk on equal terms with NASA," he said.

By the middle of last year, President Frei had already received a report prepared by the FACh, in which it recommends the creation, within the framework of an overall Chilean space policy, the creation of a central organization that will include study and research on space and its exploitation in our country.

Concerning Argentine President Carlos Menem's statement that Argentina will have a space center, Gen. Rojas Vender explained that the Argentine President referred to the possibility of installing in its territory a landing strip for trans-atmospheric aircraft. These sophisticated

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aircraft, ideal for long-distance trips, are still undergoing study in the United States.

"This is in a research phase, and there is still a long way to go before commercial use can be discussed. Only then will it be decided where these airports will be built, because they could even be built in Chile or Brazil," he said.

Chile: 'Concern' Expressed Over Exercises Near Taiwan

PY1203205596 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 12 Mar 96 p C2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Chilean Government has expressed "natural concern" over the repeated firing of missiles by the PRC in the Taiwan Strait. [passage omitted]

Jose Tomas Letelier, director of the Asian-Pacific Affairs Department, said: "For us the only government is the PRC."

Letelier recognized, however, that due to the tension in that part of the world, there is great concern and the government is closely following the development of events.

Letelier added: "I would not talk about invasion because that would be going too far and would make us reevaluate the situation."

Chile strongly opposes the use of force to resolve problems between states, unless it is an act in legitimate defense to face an attack. [passage omitted]

Chile: Extradition Treaty With Australia Promulgated

PY1103140596 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 24 Feb 96 p C4

[FBIS Translated Text] Chile promulgated the Extradition Treaty that was signed with Australia in October 1993, as well as the annex documents of this treaty.

Through Decree No. 1844 issued by the Foreign Ministry, published in the official gazette, it is agreed that extradition may be applied against any person accused, tried, declared guilty, or condemned to imprisonment for a crime that merits extradition.

Among some of these crimes, the measure applies to all those whose imprisonment sentence is for over one year.

However, people responsible for crimes stemming from a political development, as long as it is not a war crime, a crime disrupting peace and order, or crimes that threaten the life, physical integrity, or freedom of a chief of state or government, or a member of his family, will not be liable for extradition.

Chile: Ministry Terms Trade Talks With Canada 'Positive'

PY1203141496 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 11 Mar 96 p B3

[FBIS Translated Text] The Finance Ministry has made a positive evaluation of the second round of negotiations between Chile and Canada for a free trade agreement held from 28 February to 4 March in Ottawa.

The delegations of the two countries explained the specific issues they want to include in the regulation of the chapters that will be part of the agreement. They also exchanged ideas on the annexes related to labor cooperation and the environment.

The issues included in the first round of talks held in Santiago last January were again discussed. The issues include access of goods to the market, the regulations related to that access, treatment of foreign investment, services offered abroad, temporary entry of businessmen, system for solving controversies, and the juridical issues related to the treaty.

An official communique reported that the Chilean negotiating team headed by Juan Gabriel Valdes of the Finance Ministry will work in the next few weeks to give the definitive legal framework to the conditions and safeguards to be included in the treaty's regulation, and that the consultations with the private sector to conform the Chilean offer will continue.

The third round of negotiations will be held on 28 and 29 March, and on 1 and 2 April in Santiago.

Chile: PDC, PRSD Form Alliance for Municipal Elections

PY0803190596 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 27 Feb 96 p C2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Alejandro Foxley, Christian Democratic Party (PDC) president, and Anselmo Sule, Radical Socialist Democratic Party (PRSD) president, announced on 26 February that both political parties are happy because the PRSD General Council has ruled in favor of an electoral pact with the PDC for the coming municipal elections.

Prominent members of the two parties had been asking if an electoral alliance would be appropriate given the results of the most recent congressional elections.

The PRSD complained that on the few occasions when it had signed a pact with the PDC, the very few PRSD and PDC militants who were given slots never supported

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the PDC when they were supposed to. Meanwhile the PDC claimed the alliance would not benefit it, and it would have been better to seek out its "natural ally," the Socialist Party.

Anselmo Sule explained that his party's claims were heard and accepted by the PDC, the leaderships of both parties reached an agreement which received the blessing of the PRSD General Council, and a pact was signed by which the PRSD will be able to field at least one candidate in every county. [passage omitted]

Chile: Government Achievements Viewed on 2d Anniversary

PY1203173896 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 10 Mar 96 p 6

[Article by Raul Rojas]

[FBIS Translated Text] Government Secretary General Jose Joaquin Brunner said the government has enough reason to celebrate the second anniversary of the administration of President Eduardo Frei. He said, however, that a great deal still remains to be done to overcome poverty.

Brunner was very kind to accept an interview with LA TERCERA on the second anniversary of the Frei administration, which will be celebrated tomorrow.

He said: "The government goes into its third year in a very good situation because the country is in a position of stability and growth with a very clear work plan." He added: "This plan has basic issues, that require the participation of all Chileans to be able to face the challenge of the future, especially in the areas of education, infrastructure, health, justice, and the fight against poverty."

[Rojas] Is there anything negative or difficult that should create concern?

[Brunner] I believe we should continue to be concerned about the fact that our society, despite the multiple progress being observed, still has very serious unequal conditions in the distribution of opportunities, and extreme poverty situations that are not compatible with a modern and democratic society.

[Rojas] Do you believe the government deviated from its main course by concentrating in the political areas, specifically the constitutional reforms?

[Brunner] I don't believe that at all. The constitutional reforms are only carried out within the political system because the system is obligated to carry out constitutional and democratic improvements, which are necessary for the country's stable development, and to be able to create the agreements we need to concentrate the national energy into growth.

In face of the opposition criticisms demanding the government's greater concern for the real problems of the people, Minister Brunner said: "I believe the opposition is fulfilling its role when it criticizes, demands, and urges the government on certain issues. But I believe the opposition is currently in a bad condition to make valid and credible demands before the people. The opposition is internally divided and disorganized, and represents minorities in the country. It still has to learn the lessons of full democracy to have its voices represent a wider spectrum of Chilean society. Therefore, accepting the role that the opposition fulfills, its criticisms do not go too much with reality.

[Rojas] Do you think the people who say that macroeconomic progress is not reflected in the microeconomy or in the pockets of the poor are right?

[Brunner] Taking into account the stage of development of our country, general growth is indeed faster that the concrete benefits that this growth reflects in the daily life of the people. This is absolutely inevitable, it is well known in the history of development of the capitalist and democratic societies. What should be done is to maintain the rhythm of growth, because it is the basis for greater equality. What should be done is what the government is doing: To have clearly defined public policies to continue helping the poor sectors.

[Rojas] Would you say that the human rights issue is a thorn in the government's side or do you believe there are possibilities for a solution?

[Brunner] Human rights is not a government issue but an issue of the country, because the entire country has covered a very long road for national reconciliation. We live in a society that found reconciliation in its daily human contacts and ethical principles. But we still have what was left of the human right violations that complicate Chilean society, especially in relation to the whereabouts of the missing. I hope this year Congress will approve the government's bill that seeks to facilitate finding the remains of the missing.

[Rojas] Do you, therefore, believe that there are more reasons to celebrate tomorrow than to deplore?

[Brunner] I believe any person who looks at the situation with objectivity, strictness, and love for his country must be satisfied with what is happening. This is not the exclusive work of the government but of all Chileans. One should also recognize the great progress made in the last few years and be willing to continue working very hard to be able to solve the most serious problems we must still face before we declare to be a fully

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democratic and developed country that really represents the principles of freedom and equality.

When Brunner was asked what it means to be minister secretary general of government, he said: "These years have been for me an interesting challenge and the possibility of continuing to make a humble contribution as part of a much greater task, which is the task of all Chileans."

Chile: Struggle Against Poverty Receives More Funds

PY0803202496 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 27 Feb 96 p C5

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Chilean Planning and Coordination Ministry (Mideplan) announced on 26 February that the National Program to Overcome Poverty will get 10.6 billion pesos in 1996 through a new system of allocations.

This is an increase of almost 150 percent over 1995, when 4 billion pesos were allocated for the program.

The funds approved by Congress as part of the 1996 budget will be allocated to 184 counties. The largest amounts will go to the Metropolitan Region (2.456 billion pesos); the Eight Region (1.632 billion pesos), and the Fifth Region (1.052 billion pesos). Concepcion, Talcahuano, Valparaiso, Arica, and Portezuelo will benefit the most.

The Mideplan uses a new distribution formula called Locally Allotted Regional Investments [Inversion Regional de Asignacion Local] (IRAL) through the Social Aid and Investment Fund (Fosis), and the Municipal Development Secretariat. These two agencies work with community social organizations.

Until 1995, regional investments were channeled through regional councils. Now the councils and the mayors will select the counties where Fosis and the Municipal Development Secretariat programs should be implemented, supply guidance on the priority aspects that community projects must take into account, and assign the resources to each county.

It will be up to the mayors and councilmen of each county to draft their work plans and prioritize the investment programs. For this they must prepare lists of communities within their counties to which the funds should be assigned, prioritize the social strata that should be focused on, and select the projects to be financed. All these plans should be ready in March.

The Fosis and the Municipal Development Secretariat will evaluate the projects submitted by the counties and will decide whether to grant the requested funds.

Planning Minister Luis Maira emphasized that the new allotment system will play a key role in the drive to decentralize the country, and to strengthen regional and local governments.

Maira said: "We are certain the approach we have developed is a giant step toward decentralizing the program to overcome poverty, and to attune our activities to the priorities that the people are bringing to our attention through their proposals." [passage omitted]

Colombia

Colombia: Samper Postpones Trips to Japan, PRC Indefintely

PA1303004496 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 12 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This is not a cock-and-bull story. President Samper has unexpectedly postponed his visits to Japan and China that were scheduled to take place in April.

In a six-line communique, the Foreign Ministry reported that the chief of state made this decision "so as to focus his activities on Colombia's internal matters."

However, rumors circulated in diplomatic circles yesterday that the postponement had been directly suggested by the Japanese Government. The latter does not want the current Colombian crisis and the recurrent drug trafficking issue to diminish the talks on issues that are of mutual interests to both countries.

This recommendation is said to have occurred last Friday and was communicated to Bogota, through diplomatic channels, by the General Adjunct Directorate for Latin America of the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo.

In a note sent by Mr. Horimura, the chief of the mentioned office, the Japanese Government allegedly informed the Colombian Government that it would be willing to accept its apologies for the postponement of the trip.

According to this version, the person who received the note was Colombian Deputy Foreign Minister Camilo Reyes, because Foreign Minister Rodrigo Pardo was accompanying President Samper on his trip to Peru on that day.

However, Reyes stated last night that this rumor is baseless and that Samper's decision had been made in agreement with the new Japanese ambassador to Bogota, Makoto Asami.

Elvira Carmen Aparicio, a communications adviser at the Colombian Foreign Ministry, has denied the existence of such a letter and insisted that the postponement was agreed upon on friendly terms.

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According to her, the reasons presented by President Samper to indefinitely postpone his trip are basically related to Colombia's internal problems.

"Given the remoteness of those countries, the president considered it inappropriate at this time, to leave Colombia for a week," Aparicio stated.

Diplomat Naganuma, the spokesman of the Japanese Embassy in Bogota, said the diplomatic mission did not have any information in this regard.

Colombia: Samper Denies Decertification Effects

PA1303014696 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 12 Mar 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ernesto Samper appeared surprised yesterday with what he described as "speculation over hypothetical effects of the decertification" and said, "I can't see them anywhere."

He said he does not believe the businessmen will now commit "the mistake of shooting themselves in the foot" by endorsing a strike in the production sector.

"We, the Colombian people, are experts in exaggerating problems and announcing nonexistent crises," Samper said during an interview with the Caracol radio network.

Samper took advantage of the radio interview to make a call "to act calmly. Otherwise, we will be the ones who turn temporary difficulties into permanent crises," he said.

He added that the probable effects of decertification "are under control." "We already have the sources to substitute for the Eximbank credits, which would eventually be replaced with European sources, taking into consideration the excellent credit enjoyed by, for instance, Ecopetrol [Colombian Petroleum Enterprise], in the world market," he explained.

Asked about the eventual businessmen's strike, announced recently by Valle del Cauca leader German Holguin as a possible solution of the crisis, Samper said that, as far as he understood, it was a very isolated call.

"He is a regional union leader. I think this makes no sense at all. I cannot see any future in it. I don't think businessmen will make the mistake now of shooting themselves in the foot, so to speak, by promoting a business strike of which the significance or scope would be no different from creating an economic crisis that does not exist at present," he also said.

Regarding the support for this proposal from former foreign minister Noemi Sanin, Samper said this expression of solidarity with such a cause turns a businessmen's protest into a political strike.

"We are truly attending to a disclosure of the probable causes or origins that could justify this stance. They are no different from what we have been living through these past months. It is an attempt to move toward de facto situations," he said.

Samper added that the Congress can rightfully hold special hearings to learn about the positions of those who call for an eventual strike in the production sector.

Today the Senate's 3d Committee will consider the terms of an obligatory summons for Sanin and other persons to explain what the purpose of this protest is.

Regarding the remainder of his visit to Trujillo, Peru, where he attended an Andean country group summit, Samper said this has been one of the group's most productive meetings.

He said the Andean Group's reorganization will make it possible to attain much more rapidly an integration process that will be externally oriented. "This is what is needed at this time of an economic opening," he added.

He pointed out that, although Colombia did not seek the Andean countries' solidarity regarding decertification, he felt satisfied with the fact that the Group rejected any unilateral form of judgment in the counterdrug struggle.

Colombia: 'True Reasons' for Zuniga's Resignation Viewed

PA1203190296 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 12 Mar 96

[Special report from the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"; monitored from retransmission by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision Television at 0100 GMT on 12 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Colombian Government and General Hernando Camilo Zuniga have attempted to belittle the true reasons for Zuniga's resignation. Although on various occasions, Zuniga's resignation was said to be imminent, this report was denied several times. Zuniga's preannounced resignation only resulted in a delayed one.

[Begin Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra recording] He has not submitted his resignation or the so-called application for retirement. He is still considering this matter. He has not informed me of any decision in this regard. [end recording]

Apparently, Zuniga had wished to retire for two reasons: first, for an apparent suspension of his visa to enter the

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United States and, for the objections that U.S. authorities might have against this high-ranking military officer. The value of this version has lessened. The United States, however, has neither officially confirmed nor denied this version thus far.

[Begin Zuniga recording] None of the officers allegedly involved has been officially notified that their visa has been suspended. Every country has the power to issue visas. [end recording]

Another reason for Zuniga's retirement might be his open estrangement from current Defense Minister Esguerra. The last time, his disagreements with Esguerra occurred in front of President Ernesto Samper. At an unexpected meeting on Friday evening, various generals expressed their solidarity with Zuniga. President Samper solved this situation by expressing his support both to Minister Esguerra and to Gen. Zuniga. Today, Gen. Zuniga resigned.

Colombia: Bogota Stock Market Closes With 'New Shake-Up'

PA1303034196 Paris AFP in Spanish
0156 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 12 Mar 96 (AFP) — The Bogota Stock Market today closed with a new shake-up. It reported that its IBB [Stock Index of the Bogota Stock Market] index, which is based on a portfolio of 20 stocks, recorded a 1.43-percent loss, 10.95 points, and closed at 764.74 points.

The other indicators also fell and recorded losses as follows: the financial indicator fell by 9.73 points; the industrial indicator, by 6.17 percent; and the trade and services indicator, by 3.54 percent.

The value of today's transactions amounted to 79.992 billion pesos ($79 million). The following transactions predominated: certificates of deposit for 54.333 billion pesos, private bonds for 15.914 billion pesos, and BCH [Central Mortgage Bank] securities [cedulas] for 2.199 billion pesos.

Approximately 1.837 million stock worth 2.163 billion pesos were negotiated, which represented 2.7 percent of the total amount.

The dollar rate was also shaken today. Its representative or average rate in the exchange market was quoted at 1,043.50, as compared to the 1,042.42 dollar rate of 11 March.

Colombia: Businessmen Divided Over Calls For Strike

PA1203171796 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish
0000 GMT 12 Mar 96

[Report by Amilkar Hernandez; from the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"; monitored from the retransmission by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision Television at 0100 GMT on 12 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] The entrepreneurial strike against President Samper proposed by Valle del Cauca leader German Holguin Zamorano continues to cause friction. The proposal seems to have divided entrepreneurs.

The entrepreneurial strike has divided the entrepreneurs. The owners of many industries have personally (?requested) their association spokesmen to take radical measures over the crisis, such as the nonpayment of taxes or beginning a national strike.

[Begin Sabas Pretelt de la Vega, president of the National Federation of Businessmen, recording] There are many such strike proposals and calls for the closing of businesses, but we business association leaders have to handle this with much prudence. [end recording]

The business associations themselves are divided over the strike. Some reject it outright; others do not say yes or no and leave the hot potato to their board of directors. The less timid point out that this is not yet the right time for discussing this.

[Begin recording] [Jorge Bisval, president of the National Cattle Breeders Association] It seems to me that it is still too soon to debate this topic. I believe we need to be a little prudent and patient.

[Hernan Puyo, acting president of the National Association of Industrialists] At this moment, it would be too hasty to respond to this. It is logical that we should wait for the board to decide.

[Juan Manuel Ospina, executive president of the Association of Colombian Farmers] There is no reason whatsoever for an entrepreneurial strike at this moment, regardless of how respectful the goals of many enterprises may be. [end recording]

The business associations and the entrepreneurs agree that they will wait to be summoned by Congress to openly express their ideas.

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Colombia: Decertification Effects on Bank Credit Viewed

PA1203152896 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 11 Mar 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the decertification, the dilemma now arises as to how much weight the U.S. negative vote will carry with the Inter—American Development Bank [IDB] and the World Bank [WB].

The financing of more than 20 projects worth $3 billion is in doubt due to the U.S. decertification of Colombia's struggle against drug trafficking.

These projects wait in line for WB and IDB approval.

The credits causing most concern are the IDB's, because U.S. participation in the final decisionmaking is equivalent to 30 percent, which causes an imbalance; $1.5 billion is expected from this bank over the next three years.

Without these resources, agrarian reform, education, and technical assistance programs will be affected, as well as infrastructure works and micro enterprise development plans.

Colombia: Editorial Says U.S. Lacks Wisdom on Drug Issue

PA1203172196 Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 10 Mar 96 p 2A

[Editorial: "Facing the United States"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Neither the U.S. Government nor Congress has shown wisdom in the handling of the situation created by the widespread drug trafficking problem. The presidential elections process has irrationally interfered with the subjective analysis of the current serious situation and its consequences, and the pursuit of votes has cloaked defiant attitudes in fake morals.

Following President Clinton's decertification, everything that has been said at the U.S. Congress has a threatening tone of blatant intervention and foreseeable consequences, especially for the nations of our hemisphere, in the handling of our domestic policies and the free exercise of our national sovereignties.

We cannot forget that all Democrats, as well as Republicans, have used, without contemplation [reatos], their military and economic might to subject to their will various peoples of the world. Without forgetting the foiled Bay of Pigs invasion, the interventions in Grenada and Panama, which ignored the clearest regulations of international law, persist in our memories as having taken place most recently.

So, everything that has been going on at the U.S. Congress is not a simple electoral fuss, although that is certainly part of it. What Assistant Secretary of State Gelbard has said directly implicates President Clinton and his government. When some of its congressmen make evident their thorough ignorance — as when they proposed destroying the coca and poppy plantations of Peru and Bolivia, with their consent or without, or when, without having taken a look at the map of the continent, they announced the blockade of Bolivian ports by the U.S. fleet — the threatening meaning of their expressions continues a history of never-refuted invasions and territorial annexations, from which our peoples have painful experience.

We are not dealing with isolated events, but with an unrelenting lesson in history.

Consequently, the threat looming over our peoples concerns the entire hemisphere equally, not only in terms of its common destiny but also in terms of the preservation of its tutelary principles, which have been used to shape the achievements of our international law. The Bolivarian ideal is here, alive, harmonious with the dignity of a history consecrating the sovereign exercise of our political independence.

The governments of our hemisphere — particularly those that are directly threatened: Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia, and Peru — should consequently promote a united front that, spreading to the rest of the countries of the continent and even summoning the solidarity of the European and Asian governments, would state the drug trafficking problem beyond immediate U.S. interests and would instill in it the essential broad meaning it has, committing all the peoples of the world adversely affected by it in the cooperative task of eradicating it.

However, do not let it be used later, in an evident diversion from rational objectives, to erect the U.S. Government and its immediate economic and electoral requirements as the supreme arbitrator of the universe and a vindictive judge of its destruction.

In turn, it would be good advice for us Colombians to strengthen our domestic political unity and the balance exercised by our public branches. They favor nothing; on the contrary, they harm the attitude of the attorney general as he faces the Prosecutor General's Office or the attitude of the latter in light of the questionable position of the DAS [Administrative Department of Security] on specific legal processes, or the attitude of the chief of police, who is engaged in barely edifying

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public discussions with the defense attorney of one of the legally accused.

A country without a clear notion of the monolithic unity of the state is running the risk, as it is now, of being swept away by harmful passions, the concupiscence of power, and personal emulations.

What is imperative for Colombians is a united front to face the dangers that are threatening us and the democratic restoration of political power, which has been weakened by permanent public distrust...

Colombia: Confidentiality of Samper Proceedings Lifted

PA1203222996 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 12 Mar 96

[From the "National Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attention. An agreement has just been reached at the Chamber of Representatives to lift the confidentiality of proceedings regarding the trial against President Ernesto Samper. Alberto Medina reports live via microwave. Good afternoon, Alberto. What's the news?

[Begin Medina relay] Good afternoon, Yolanda. The Chamber of Representatives has quickly approved a portion of a bill to lift the confidentiality of proceedings. The bill permits the Congress to open its files and the debates so that the general public can learn about the details of the proceedings at the Congress. Nevertheless, the confidentiality of proceedings remains in force for the gathering of evidence. A subject which has not been brought up for discussion deals with whether the vote, both at the Chamber of Representatives and the Accusations Commission, should be held behind closed doors or in public. This subject, which was presented by the Chamber of Representatives President Rodrigo Rivera, will start to be debated in a few minutes. [end relay]

Colombia: FARC Attacks Narcotics Police Center

PA1303045796 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0344 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 12 Mar (NOTIMEX) — Colombian Defense Ministry sources reported that one police officer was killed, one mayor kidnapped, a town was under siege for several hours, and three buses were torched, during offensives launched by guerrillas today.

The sources indicated that the first event occurred in the Miraflores community, located in the middle of the jungle in the southeastern department of Guaviare, when approximately 200 rebels attacked a Narcotics Police center.

"The municipality is surrounded by Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels. A military spokesman announced that they have left the center they attacked, but they are still in the area." He also reported that troops were being sent to the area immediately.

Another guerrilla faction killed Lieutenant Jaime Herrera, the police commander for the Puerto Rico community in the southern department of Caqueta.

Official sources reported that several men hid in a secluded spot and shot the officer when he was going home.

The Defense Ministry also confirmed that Luis Jose Paredes, the mayor of Socorro municipality, located in the northeastern department of Santander, was kidnapped by an alleged Army of National Liberation (ELN) commando.

The FARC and the ELN belong to the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board (CGSB); a group that has attacked military and police forces and government objectives since several attempts to reach a peace agreement failed over the past years.

The Socorro mayor was traveling, together with several of his municipal council members, to Santa Fe de Bogota, when they were intercepted by the kidnappers who took him and allowed the other politicians to go free.

The authorities also reported that three public buses were scorched in a low-income section of Santa Fe de Bogota. The action seems to have been committed by a FARC urban commando that placed incendiary bombs in the vehicles.

The official report noted that the material damages have been considerable and ended by stating that peace has gradually returned to the places targeted by the guerrillas.

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